

CAC FAQs & How To

Last Updated: 27 FEB 2006



What is a CAC?

CACs, or Common Access Cards, are electronic identity cards that store certificates to help ensure that individuals are who they say they are.

What do I use a CAC for?

Registering your CAC will allow you to login to the NIPRNET (required by 30 JUN 2006 for all Army domains); send encrypted and digitally signed emails (through Outlook or another email client; currently unavailable for AKO webmail); login to AKO; and login to AKO single sign-on protected websites.

What does it mean to "Register a CAC"?

The CAC registration process is a two-part process. You will need to register your CAC with your [web browser \(Part 1\)](#) and with [AKO \(Part 2\)](#) so that both systems know how to accept the certificates on your CAC. Once you have completed the two-part registration process, you can use your CAC and private PIN to sign into AKO. Please note that you need both the [correct software](#) and the [correct hardware](#) to complete the CAC registration process and to then use your CAC to login to AKO.

This document will help you troubleshoot the following issues that may arise as you attempt to login to AKO using your CAC (click question to go directly to the issue's resolution):

What does it mean to "Register a CAC"?

What software is required to use a CAC on my computer?

What hardware is required to use a CAC on my computer?

Registration Part 1: How do I Register my CAC with my Web Browser?

Verification Part 1: Confirming the Web Browser Registration

Registration Part 2: How do I Register my CAC with AKO?

Verification Part 2: Confirming AKO Login with CAC

What do I do if I am Locked Out?

What is the difference between AKO CAC Registration and AKO Account Verification?

What software is required to use a CAC on my computer?

You must have the appropriate software installed on your computer in order to allow your computer to interact with a CAC reader. The Army has two approved products, ActivCard Gold and Litronic Netsign, which are included on the Army Golden Master. Your DOIM is responsible for loading the appropriate version on your computer.

Interacting with the reader includes registering your CAC, so please ensure that this software is already installed before beginning the registration process. In order to have the CAC software installed onto your work computer you will need to contact your local System Administrator.

PLEASE NOTE: THE AKO HELP DESK CANNOT ASSIST YOU WITH OBTAINING OR INSTALLING THE CAC SOFTWARE.

Additional information will be posted in the AKO CAC Resource Center located at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/241504>.

What hardware is required to use a CAC on my computer?

You must have a CAC reader in order to use a CAC on your computer. All Army personnel are eligible for a reader; your organization should issue you a CAC reader if one is not built into your workstation. Readers for home use can be purchased from the Army Small Computer Program at <https://ascp.monmouth.army.mil/scp/index.jsp>. Additional CAC readers for remote access (travel or home) may be supported by the government as long as the appropriate commander/director determines it is a necessary expenditure; please speak to your supervisor for more information.

PLEASE NOTE: THE AKO HELP DESK CANNOT ASSIST YOU WITH OBTAINING OR INSTALLING THE CAC HARDWARE.

Registration Part 1: How do I Register my CAC with my Web Browser?

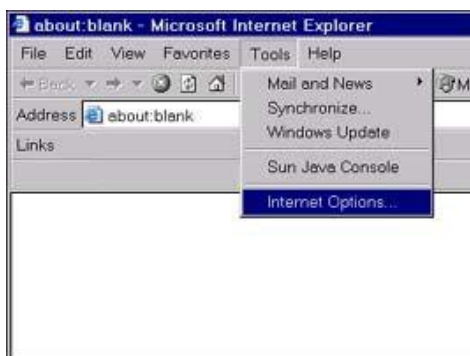
1. Insert your CAC into the smart-card reader (either built in to your keyboard or a separate tool plugged in to your system).
2. Double-click the CAC icon in the system tray (located on the taskbar at the bottom right of your screen). If you don't see this icon, you likely do not have the software installed yet.



3. Enter your PIN when prompted.
 - a. Note: If you enter your PIN incorrectly 3 times, your CAC will become locked and you will need to go to your CAC issuer's office to get it unlocked.
4. The smart-card utilities window will appear once your PIN has been verified. Go to the "Tools" menu (accessible at the top of the utilities window) and click on "Register Certificates..." You will be notified that you are registering your certificates with your web browser, and asked if you wish to continue. Click "Yes." This will register the ID, Email Encryption, and Email Signature certificates associated with your CAC. Note that this will NOT share your private key.
6. Click "OK" once you are notified that the certificates have been installed.

Verification Part 1: Confirming the Web Browser Registration

1. To verify that your certificates have been registered with your browser, open up your web browser. Click on "Tools" in your browser's top bar and open up "Internet Options." Then click on "Content," and then select "Certificates."

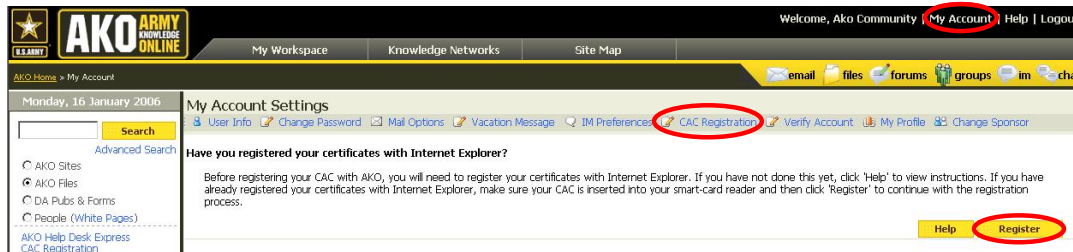


2. You should have at least three certificates identified by your CAC username: LAST.FIRST.MI.XXXXXXXXXX

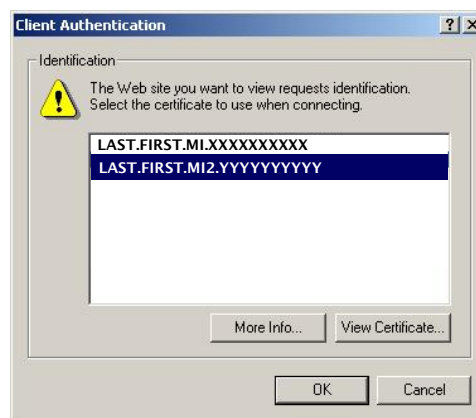
Registration Part 2: How do I Register my CAC with AKO?

Once the certificates are registered with your browser, you will need to register your CAC with AKO to tie your CAC with your existing AKO account.

1. Log into AKO with your AKO user ID and password. Click on My Account in the upper right corner and click "CAC Registration" in the Toolbar.



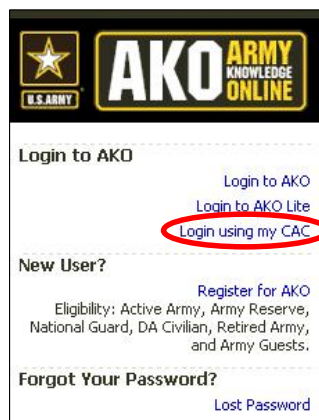
2. You will be prompted to select your ID certificates for your CAC (identified by your CAC username: LAST.FIRST.MI.XXXXXXXXXX). After selecting your ID certificate for your CAC, click **OK**. If other users have registered on this computer, you might see their certificate as well. Be sure to select your own. If you do not see your certificate, go back to Registering Part 1 and ensure you have registered your certificates with your browser.



3. You will be asked to verify some information and then your CAC will be registered with AKO. (You can also get to CAC Registration through the My Workspace tab.)

Verification Part 2: Confirming AKO Login with CAC

1. Please go to <https://www.us.army.mil> and select "Login using my CAC."



2. You will be prompted to select your ID certificates for your CAC (identified by your CAC username: LAST.FIRST.MI.XXXXXXXXXX). After selecting your ID certificates for your CAC, click **OK**.
3. The system will then validate your ID certificates and log you in to AKO accordingly.



What do I do if I am Locked Out?

If you do not know your CAC PIN or if you have locked out your CAC PIN (after three incorrect tries) you should contact your local help desk to determine the location of the nearest CAC PIN Reset (CPR) station. You should go to an ID Card Issuance Facility (your central processing/badge office or Local Registration Authority) to have your PIN reset only if a CPR station is unavailable.

Do Not Call The AKO Help Desk. The AKO Help Desk Cannot Assist You If You Have Locked Your CAC.

What is the difference between AKO CAC Registration and AKO Account Verification?

AKO CAC Registration, as described above, is how you let AKO know that you have your CAC and would like to use it to log in to AKO. AKO Account Verification is a separate action in which you are confirming with AKO that you have an official DoD record. Verify Account is located next to CAC Registration under My Account. See image above in below.

